



UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ SERVING THE CITIZENS OF IDAHO

LARRY CRAIG

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NEWS RELEASE

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WESTERN WEEDS WILL WITHER

Senators introduce legislation to fund invasive species control projects in the West

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Idaho Senator Larry Craig joined Senators Reid, D-Nev., Domenici, R-N.M., and Wyden, D-Ore., in introducing legislation to combat invasive species in the West. The bill sets up a state revolving loan fund to provide resources for invasive species control. It is modeled after similar programs for drinking water funds.

Craig, the lead Republican sponsor of the bill, stated, “Invasive species, such as noxious weeds, are particularly troublesome in the West, where much of our land is entrusted to the management of the federal government. Like a ‘slow burning wildfire,’ noxious weeds take land out of production, force native species off the land, and interrupt the commerce and activities of all those who rely on the land for their livelihoods -- including farmers, ranchers, recreationists, and others.

“I have seen firsthand the destruction caused when noxious weeds are not treated, eradicated, and are left to overtake native species. Because of this, I declared war on noxious weeds, and this legislation will be a vital piece of the arsenal.”

Roger Batt, coordinator for the Idaho Weed Awareness Campaign, praised the legislation, “This legislation would allow Idaho more opportunity to acquire funding for the necessary control of invasive species such as noxious weeds through a process that holds the borrower of funds accountable through a loan funding and repayment mechanism.”

In addition to Idaho, eligible States are Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. The bill authorizes a total of \$410 million over 5 years.

The bill has a set of eleven funding criteria, which include projects that:

- Promote wildlife management strategies focused on reintroducing native plant species
- Reduce changes in wildlife habitat
- Remediate the spread of aquatic invasive species through important bodies of water
- Prevent the regrowth or reintroduction of an invasive species.